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and the Foreign Office on the other, the author almost foretells the course of events which afterwards justified his forecast.

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his accession to the throne, Abdul Hamid II promised the believers, among other things, the building of a telegraph and railroad line to Mecca in order to spare the pilgrims the necessity of using the boats of the Giaurs. This project had, however, a very worldly side, because from the oldest times, and long before Mohammed, Mecca had been the crossing of the two great roads that control traffic on the Arabian peninsula, a north-south one between Syria and Yemen, and a west-east one from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Persia. With the Red Sea in the hands of the English, the construction of an overland route through that country under Turkish control was a national and political, as well as religious, enterprise.

Considering the close relations between Arabia and Africa on one hand, and the extension of that railroad into Syria on the other, it is evident that that road would, when completed, control the nearer East from Asia Minor to Abyssinia. It is with some apprehension, therefore, that the author, as a Frenchman, watches the progress of Germany in Syria and Palestine and the sale by England of the Syrian railroad concessions to a German syndicate, so that Germany might eventually control nearer Asia, from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and, in coöperation with Turkey, also the land route to India. He already sees Barbarossa resuscitated to complete his conquest of the Holy Land.

With all these forces at play, the value of that railroad for those in whose interest it was claimed to be constructed seems somewhat problematical and, by way of the Turco-German "tyranny" and the Syrio-English agitation, it may benefit in the end,—like so many enterprises, and especially railroads, in the Turkish empire—nobody but the French or German companies who will install themselves on the ground that has been prepared by others.

The story of the Bagdad railroad is very much like that of the Pilgrim road. It had, too, long been planned by England and Turkey combined, but, in the exultation over the building of the Suez Canal, England lost view of it and Germany promptly stepped in. If the jealousies and apprehensions of one's competitors are a gauge of success, German readers of that book may feel safe about the prospects of their railroads in the Near East, and while the author's opinions on that subject may not be entirely unbiased, the book remains nevertheless a scientific and up-to-date study of the situation on that much coveted territory, and in spite of its more political character it does not neglect the geographical side of the subject.

M. K. GENTHE.

Outlines of Agriculture in Japan. iv and 132 pp., map and illustrations.

Published by the Agricultural Bureau, Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Tokyo, 1910. 9 x 6.

The work was compiled to acquaint foreigners with the general outlines of the agriculture of Japan. The two features that characterize Japanese farming are (1) that the cultivation of rice has the leading position, the value of the rice crop being equal to that of all the other agricultural industries; and (2) that farms are very small and farming is intensive. Seventy per cent. of the farmers till only 2.45 acres or less. All the farmers who cultivate more than 7.35 acres of land each do not exceed three per cent. of the total number of agriculturists. The result of the enormous population and of the small area of the fields is that methods of cultivation are necessarily intensive and crops are generally

raised twice a year from the same farm. Many younger nations are now giving much attention to the maintenance of the fertility of the soil. They may well study the methods of Japan, whose soil has for ages been forced to produce enormous quantities of food and is still kept in the highest state of fertility. The book tells how every particle of fertilizer produced at home is utilized in the field, even to weeds, the ashes of plants, and the sweepings of the streets, in addition to the large quantity of commercial fertilizers imported from abroad. The work discusses all phases of Japanese agriculture and is a very useful contribution to our knowledge of the greatest activity of the Japanese people.

Mining in Japan. Past and Present. Published by The Bureau of Mines, The Department of Agriculture and Commerce of Japan. 1909. v and 322 pp., and maps. 10 x 6½.

This work was especially prepared to give information regarding the past history and the present condition of mining in Japan. Its maps show the distribution of the metals and the coal and oil fields of the empire, and the text, treating each mining industry separately, describes its history and development with more detailed information as to the most important mines and oil fields.

EUROPE

Early Britain. Roman Britain. By Edward Conybeare. 275 pp., map and index. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1911. 3s. 6d. 6½ x 4½.

A trustworthy and readable sketch of the historical growth and decay of Roman influence in Britain, illustrated by the archæology of the period. Seventy-seven ancient authors are referred to, and all of the best modern authorities were consulted. The book gives 123 pages to pre-Roman Britain, 36 to the Roman conquest, 64 to the Roman occupation and 51 to the end of Roman Britain. A chronological table and list of authorities are included.

British Mountain Climbs. By George D. Abraham. xvi and 448 pp., illustrations and index. Mills & Boon, Ltd., London, 1909. 7 x 4½.

A handy book for the pocket and a conveniently small and concise guide to the British rock-climbs, the result for the most part of the author's personal experience. British mountain climbers find much recreation and enjoyment among the higher elevations of Wales and Scotland, and not a few of the climbs described in this book require roping if the climbers take sensible precautions against accident. The author groups these British climbs around the most convenient centers and mentions the most helpful maps at the beginning of his leading chapters.

Swiss Mountain Climbs. By George D. Abraham. xv and 432 pp., illustrations and index. Mills & Boon, Ltd., London W., 1911. 7s. 6d. 7 x 4½.

A work that all Alpinists will appreciate. It is full of suggestions with regard to the most popular and important climbs among the Alps. Sketch maps show the best routes to many summits. The book includes a considerable number of climbs of no great difficulty and seems to encourage even those who are in no sense mountaineers to attempt some of them. The author says:

"Few Englishmen, aye, and even women if they be sound of wind and limb, but can tackle an average Alpine ascent. Good strong trustworthy guides are